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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002602

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/28/2012

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [SO](#) [IT](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY SUPPORTS SOMALI PEACE, NOT PUNTLAND
MILITARY; THINKS ETHIOPIA'S MELES MAY BE STALLING
DEMARCATIION

REF: FBIS AFP20020521000147

CLASSIFIED BY: POLMINCOUNS TOM COUNTRYMAN, REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: THE MFA DENIES REF REPORT THAT ITALY HAS
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PROMISED MILITARY AID TO PUNTLAND. THE GOI HAS NO PLANS TO
AID PUNTLAND BUT IS OFFERING AID FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES RELATED
TO THE SOMALI PEACE PROCESS AND COULD EXTEND FURTHER PEACE
PROCESS AID ON REQUEST. THE MFA'S READOUT ON A RECENT GOI
TRIP TO ETHIOPIA INDICATES THAT MELES IS INTERESTED IN
DRAGGING OUT THE DEMARCATIION PROCESS AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.
END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) POLOFF CONTACTED PAOLA IMPERIALE, MFA OFFICE DIRECTOR
FOR EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS, ON MAY 24 TO INQUIRE ABOUT REF
REPORT OF COL. ABDULLAHI YUSUF AHMAD SAYING THAT PUNTLAND HAD
BEEN PROMISED MILITARY ASSISTANCE BY UGANDA, ETHIOPIA, AND
ITALY. IMPERIALE STATED THAT THE GOI HAD NOT OFFERED ANY
ASSISTANCE TO PUNTLAND. AHMAD HAD WRITTEN A LETTER TO THE
GOI REQUESTING AID FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES AND HAD NOT YET
RECEIVED A RESPONSE. HOWEVER, THE GOI WOULD HAVE TO REPLY IN
THE NEGATIVE, SINCE PUNTLAND'S PRIORITIES WERE NOT COVERED BY
THE GOI'S FOREIGN AID LAW.

[1](#)3. (C) ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOI WAS PREPARED TO SUPPORT
THE PEACE PROCESS FINANCIALLY. IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST BY
KENYA'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SOMALIA, THE GOI HAD DECIDED TO
PROVIDE UP TO 100,000E FOR TRAVEL TO NAIROBI BY THE MEDIATION
COMMITTEE OF FRONT-LINE STATES. FURTHERMORE, THE GOI
EXPECTED KENYA TO ASK THE IGAD PARTNERS' FORUM TO PAY FOR
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DELEGATES TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE, PLANNED
FOR JULY 10 IN NAIROBI. THE GOI WOULD CONSIDER THIS REQUEST
FAVORABLY.

[1](#)4. (C) IMPERIALE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO ETHIOPIA
WITH SENATOR RINO SERRI, THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE
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PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR THE ETHIOPIA-ERITREA
CONFLICT. THEY SPOKE WITH ETHIOPIAN PRESIDENT MELES ABOUT
HIS 23-PAGE LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOUNDARY
COMMISSION REQUESTING CLARIFICATIONS ON THE DECISION. MELES
DESCRIBED THE LETTER AS A LEGAL, NOT POLITICAL, MATTER.
POLITICALLY, THE VERDICT WAS FINAL AND BINDING, BUT UNMEE
SHOULD STAY UNTIL THE LAST DEMARCATIION MARKER WAS PLACED.
IMPERIALE'S VIEW WAS THAT MELES WAS TAKING THIS STANCE MOSTLY
IN ORDER TO SPITE ERITREA, WHICH SOUGHT A SPEEDY DEMARCATIION
AND THE DEPARTURE OF UNMEE.
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